

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. (Currently ~~amended~~) A method for overload protection for an exchange, comprising the steps of:

determining at a first exchange a congestion value indicative of a level of overload congestion at said first exchange; informing neighboring exchanges of said exchange which detects an overload of itself of a level of overload congestion via an overload congestion value that is specified network wide,

transferring said congestion value to a second exchange neighboring said first exchange;

computing at said second exchange in one of said neighboring exchanges, an effective congestion value from information of several of based on a plurality of said overload congestion values received from said first exchange, and;

controlling a protective measure for said second exchange with respect to the first exchange based on said effective congestion value.

controlling protective measures of said one of said neighboring exchanges with respect to a congested exchange.

2. (Currently ~~amended~~) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of transferring further comprises:~~ing the steps of:~~

transferring said overload congestion value to said second exchange in a call processing message;

interpreting missing congestion information as an overload congestion value of 0 when a call processing message arrives without an overload congestion value and integrating said overload congestion value of 0 into said computation of said effective congestion value.

3. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said step of computing an effective congestion value further comprises the steps of:

~~computing~~ ~~forming~~ an average congestion value, upon expiration of a definite time interval, utilizing said congestion values received during said definite time interval, and

utilizing said average congestion value to calculate said ~~current~~ effective congestion value.

4. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said step of computing an effective congestion value further comprises the steps of:

computing, upon expiration of a time interval, a current effective congestion value with the aid of:

an average congestion value ~~of overload~~ determined from said congestion values received within said time interval, and

an effective congestion value that was computed at an end of an immediately preceding time interval.

5. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said step of computing an effective congestion value further comprises the steps of:

~~forming~~ ~~determining~~ a plurality of time-interval-related average congestion values from ~~overload~~ said congestion values that are received ~~in~~ during a plurality of consecutive time intervals,

weighting said plurality of average congestion values; and

~~summing~~ ~~adding~~ said plurality of weighted average congestion values over a time frame, producing a summed weighted average.

6. (Currently ~~amended~~) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said step of computing an effective congestion value further comprises the steps of:

utilizing a last effective congestion value and an average congestion value of said congestion values received within an immediately preceding time interval;

forming an effective congestion value which is elevated by a specific first value relative to said last effective congestion value when said average congestion value is greater than a specific first threshold value;

forming an effective congestion value which is reduced by a specific second value relative to said last effective congestion value when said average congestion value is less than a specific second threshold value.

7. (Currently ~~amended~~) A method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of:

updating, upon reception of a new ~~overload~~ congestion value, a current effective congestion value ~~being computed~~ utilizing a previous effective congestion value and said received new congestion value.

8. (Currently ~~amended~~) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said step of computing an effective congestion value comprises computing an effective congestion value only when a congestion has been established, said congestion being established when at least one positive congestion value has been received at said second exchange within a definite past time fame.

9. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said congestion value is related to an ACL value in accordance with an ACC standard.

10. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said protective measure comprises a measure selected from the group consisting of a denial of calls and an alternate routing of calls.

11. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of:

mapping said effective congestion value ~~is mapped~~ onto a protection control value; and,

wherein the step of controlling a protective measure for said second exchange
~~a neighboring exchange controlling a protective measure implemented by said~~
~~neighboring exchange~~ includes utilizing said protection control value.

12. (New) The method of claim 2 further comprising the steps of:

assigning a congestion value of zero to a call processing message if said call processing message is received without a congestion value; and

using said zero value when computing said effective congestion value.

13. (New) A first exchange in a network comprising first and second neighboring exchanges, the first exchange comprising:

means for receiving from the second exchange a congestion value indicative of a level of an overload congestion at the second exchange;

means for computing an effective congestion value based on a plurality of successive congestion values received from the second exchange, and;

means for controlling a protective measure for said first exchange with respect to the second exchange based on said effective congestion value.

14. (New) A first exchange as defined in claim 13 wherein the means for computing an effective congestion value includes means for computing an average congestion value of a plurality of said congestion values received from said second exchange during a time interval and means for using said average congestion value to calculate said effective congestion value.
